

when we entered this hall, which will be different again when we leave it, which alter with every breath we draw ; bodies which we change in their entirety several times during our life. Does it not strike us with wonder and with awe to reflect that the very elements of them, which are for a moment at our command, should have been tossed to and fro, ages of ages ago, in that nebulous mist far-reaching into space, which is now condensed into the firm earth on which we stand ?

This, I repeat, is all taught us by Physical Science, but you know that we have not absolute demonstration for it, nor even for any part of it. Not even for the theory of gravitation, which is the most firmly established of all theories, have we what is equivalent to a mathematical demonstration. We have only *probability*; probability, it is true, of a very high order in some cases, sufficient to give us a firm conviction of the truth of the doctrines ; but probability of a very much lower order, indeed, in others.

For our purpose to-day, however, let us assume the theories or hypotheses to be absolutely demonstrated, and let us consider the deductions from them that have caused, and not unreasonably caused, such commotion within the last couple of years. Deductions, however, is hardly the right word ; they are little more than *opinions* or *beliefs*, for that is really all the weight that is claimed for them. And just here lies one of the gravest and most common mistakes. It is in supposing that Dr. Tyndall asserts that he has *proof* for these opinions or beliefs of his, if anything so negative as some of the views he holds can be called a belief. Another great and common error is in supposing that Dr. Tyndall's opinions are more antagonistic to the basis of religion than they really are. Atheists will find very cold comfort indeed